

Club Hero

Brief Program Description

Club Hero is an after-school prevention program sponsored by National Families in Action of Atlanta, Georgia. A central feature of Club Hero is a drug education curriculum that teaches children how the brain works, how drugs change the brain, change behavior, and produce addiction. Parental involvement is also an integral part of the program. Parents are encouraged to become involved in an advocacy project to improve the community and to work together to establish common expectations for their children. Club Hero is conceptually grounded in literature demonstrating the link between factors within the family environment and an adolescent's decision to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs as well as evidence supporting the efficacy of prevention programs employing social influence and generic skills training models.

An experimental design was utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of Club Hero. Although alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use outcomes including peer pressure resistance, intent to use, and actual use were among targeted outcomes, insufficient dosage strength, control group contamination, and attrition contributed to the absence of statistically significant differences between treatment and control group subjects for these outcomes.

Program Strategies

Club Hero is a multi-component program designed to help parents, teachers, and the community prevent children from entering the drug culture. The program targets risk and protective factors in multiple domains using seven principal components: (1) a student reward system, (2) homework assistance, (3) the *You Have the Right to Know* drug-education curriculum, (4) visits by local community heroes who educate students about opportunities available to them if they complete their education and are willing to work hard, (5) parental involvement in an advocacy project, (6) a gardening and environmental awareness component, and (7) summer day camp.

Population Focus

Club Hero served African American sixth grade students attending public middle school who qualified for free or partially subsidized breakfasts and lunches. Four-fifths of Club Hero youth lived in public or subsidized housing.

Suitable Settings

Club Hero can be implemented in any middle school settings. Program youth can reside in economically depressed communities known for drug trafficking, crime, and prostitution or might live in suburban or rural communities. The program has been successfully replicated in 17 mostly rural and suburban communities.

Required Resources

The following materials are available from National Families in Action:

- The *You Have the Right to Know* curriculum kit for use by program staff and others replicating Club Hero. The kit contains a course outline and materials (videos, laminated teaching guides and buttons) needed to implement each session
- Student workbooks, which include planned activities for each session
- Evaluation instruments

Implementation Timeline

Club Hero staff receives extensive training and supervision prior to and during implementation of the six hours of intervention delivered weekly to students. Weekly activities are broken down as follows:

- One hour of the *You Have the Right to Know* curriculum
- One hour devoted to work on the parent: youth advocacy project (students only)
- Two hours of homework assistance and positive recognition
- One hour of visits by outside speakers
- One hour spent working on a gardening project
- Thirty minutes of winding down with a snack
- Once a month, parents join students to work on their advocacy projects for 1.5 hours. The remaining time is spent on recreation, cultural enrichment, and arts and crafts activities.

Outcomes

Evaluations of Club Hero reveal the success of this program in achieving the following:

- Significant increases in students' knowledge of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and its impact on African American families and communities
- Increased family bonding

Process evaluation data reveal that students and parents are highly satisfied with Club Hero. Parents note many positive changes in their children including improvement in homework completion and report card grades, improved attitudes toward school, increased commitment to school, increased expectations (among students) for their performance, and decreases in the need for disciplinary actions at home. Club Hero staff believes that the program promotes bonding to school among youth and their parents.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

Program Developer

Paula Kemp
Project Coordinator
National Families in Action
Century Plaza II
2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 150
Atlanta, GA 30329
Phone: (404)248-9679
Fax: (404) 248-1312
Email: nfia@nationalfamilies.org
Web site: www.nationalfamilies.org/